

REMARKS

Claims 81-117 are currently pending and subject to a restriction/election requirement. No claims have been amended or canceled and no new claims have been added in this paper. Applicants respectfully request consideration of their claimed invention in view of the following election.

The Office Action sets forth a 4-way restriction/election requirement. The alleged species are as follows:

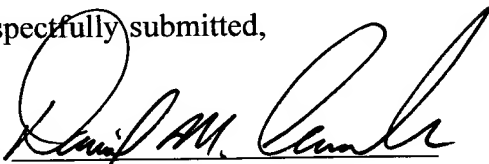
- Species I - Figs. 6a-6b;
- Species II - Fig. 6c;
- Species III - Fig. 6d; and
- Species IV - Fig. 6e.

While Applicants disagree with this requirement, to advance prosecution they elect Species I, as represented by the embodiments depicted in Figures 6a-b. Figures. Claims 81-93 and 95-117 read on the elected species, and Applicants reserve the right to have all claims within the scope of the generic claims considered in this application after such time as a generic claim is determined to be allowable.

Applicants believe all claims are in condition for allowance, and they earnestly solicit a notice to such effect. Should any issue exist that can be dealt with appropriately without need for a formal action and response thereto, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at his earliest convenience to expeditiously resolve the issue.

Dated: 5 JAN 04

Respectfully submitted,

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